GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2618
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2001
ACQUISITION OF PIECES OF BAMIYAN BUDDHA STATUES
ANNA SAHEB M.K. PATIL

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether diplomatic initiatives have been initiated to acquire the pieces of Bamiyan Buddha statues for putting them together in Bodh Gaya, Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof ; and

(c) the present status thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH)

(a) -(c) Following the issue of a decree on 26th February, 2001 ordering destruction of all statues in afaghanistan, the Taliban militia, in complete disregard of international opinion and appeals, destroyed the Bamiyan Buddhas over a period of time.

In a statement issued on 27th February, 2001, the Government had condemned the Taliban decree and called upon them to ensure full protection of Bamiyan Buddhas and other relics. On 2nd March, 2001, the External Affairs Minister made a statement in both Houses of Parliament in which, inter-alia, offered to bring these artifacts to India for safe keeping for the Afghan people. On the same day both Houses of Parliament adopted unanimous resolution condemning this barbarism. The Government also raised this issue internationally. Prime Minister also wrote to several heads of Governments, including permanent members of the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary General and others urging that the collective voice of humanity be raised against this outrage and that the Taliban be made to see reason. There was a widespread international condemnation of the Taliban militia`s actions. The UN Secretary General, Director General of UNESCO, European Union and several Muslim countries were critical of the Taliban militia.